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Planning for the future

**Leadership and preparation and development in schools
and academies with a religious character**

BELMAS funded project

Schools & academies with a religious character (SAwRC)

In England: 6923 SAwRCs

Church of England	4627
Church of Wales	3
Greek Orthodox	3
Jewish	46
Methodist	51
Muslim	99
Roman Catholic	2091
Sikh	3

- Supporting the learning of almost 2 million children and young people

- Overall, England: (2013)
 - 40% primary and 25% secondary headship posts had to be re-advertised
- C of E schools (combined) - 43% had to be re-advertised
- RC schools – 61%

- Workload – over 60 hrs/week for secondary heads
- Work/life balance
- Externally imposed change agenda
- “Football manager” culture

- Need to manage “distinctiveness” of the school
- Differences in admissions policies
- Work with the community, parish
- Need to take on faith leadership role
- For RC schools, requirement to be practicing Catholic “in good standing”

“There is not much evidence that Catholic schools have embraced succession strategies, apart from an ardent prayer that there will be someone out there, somewhere, who will be able to fill the vacancy” (Canavan, 1998, p. 27)

Does not seem to have changed...



“COM-B” models of behaviour (Michie, et al 1990)

- Capability
 - Oppportunity
 - Motivation
- } To move on to headship



- SCAPPLE
 - Mind mapping tool
 - Non-hierarchical
 - Allows free form manipulation as a means of analysis of qualitative data

Methods - contacts



- Catholic Education Service
- Church of England Education Office
- Church Times
- Tablet (article)
- Partnership for Jewish Schools
- Over 100 individual school contacts
- TES Prime (article)
- Twitter (over 30 tweets) and Facebook
- Local authorities, personal and professional contacts



Data

- Stakeholder interviews: 2
- Headteacher interviews: 9
- Online responses: 34



Results are therefore indicative but not widely generalisable

But still interesting and useful

Here, report on interview phase

Interview data – 9 Headteachers



- Average length of time teaching : 30 years
- Average time as head: 11.5
 - Only one mentioned a previous career before teaching
- Not all had always been in SAwRCs
- Only 1 would be happy to lead outside sector
- Not all were in “own” denomination schools
- All were C of E or RC schools

To get to the post (Opportunities)



- 5 said they felt they had to change schools
- Most reiterated a number of times “did not have career plans”
 - Only one had planned to be a head from the start of their career

Barriers – general (Capabilities)



- Lack of self confidence
- Short length of service (football manager)
- Effect on family life

- Sense not good enough in faith, to lead faith
- Appointing staff
- “Archbishop’s question”
- Health issues – “it seemed a heavier burden” to lead faith school
- “Being a head teacher + additional layers”

Encouraged to the role by (Opportunities)

- Colleagues (most often mentioned)
- Priests
- Diocesan director
- Chairs of governors
- Charism
- Family



What would be supportive?



- Playing out “what if” scenarios, particularly in HR and finance
- Support for how you feel about yourself as a person of faith – are you worthy?
- Church commitment to training staff
- “People need to understand what leading a church school is about”

What would help, in terms of succession?



- Time away from school
- Get people thinking about it early
- Diocesan preparation course
- Shadowing, giving people responsibility
- DfE, diocese, LAs need to do more
- Look after the spiritual side
- Re-evaluation of what it means to be “practicing Catholic”
 - exec head?

What motivated you? (Motivation)



- Challenge
- “Where I could help – I want to change the world”
- Serving the poor and the marginalised
- I knew I could do a good job
- “The culture and the extra dimensions to nurture in a church school, that aspect’s key”

Skills (Capabilities)



- “Living the life”
 - Model humility, live out your values
 - Deal with the emotional wreckage
 - Subscribe to religious ideals of school
 - Love endlessly
- Doing a good job
 - Know when to walk away, stay calm, organised
 - Good communication, team player, compromise
 - Hardworking
 - Financial skills
 - Real desire to make a difference

Skills in a SAWRC (Capabilities)



- Be prepared to love people
- Know the ethos, be able to show it
- Live the life
- Be able to articulate what it means to be a Catholic school

Attributes for heads



Technical

- Financial acumen
- Strategic intelligence
- Anticipation of change

Spiritual

- Personal faith
- Value people
- Lead with humility
- Prayer life
- Love without question

Personal

- Resilience
- Integrity, emotional intelligence
- Eternal optimism, not worry too much
- Deal with solitude
- Sense of humour
- Be yourself

Elements of leading SAwRCs

Ethos

- Distinctiveness
- Faith leadership

Succession planning

- Increasing leadership capacity

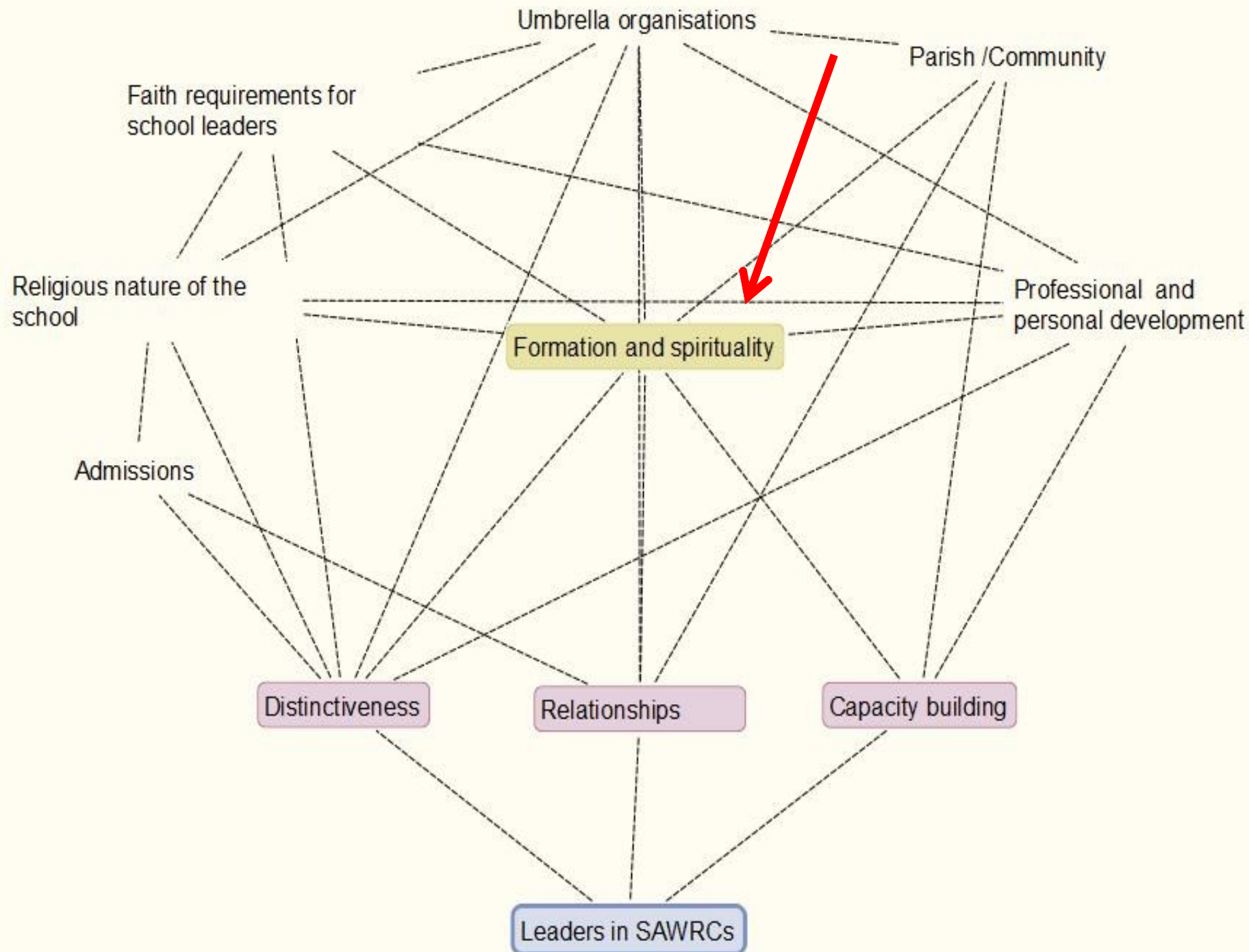
Relationships



All of this was fed into SCAPPLE



- By connecting elements, we found that two ideas seemed to be central to head teachers' vision of themselves as heads of SAwRCs and of the role itself



- Need for more opportunities for acting up, shadowing, having responsibility
 - *(What happened to distributing leadership?)*
- Consensus that the umbrella organisations need to do more
- More research on formation of leaders in SAWRCS
- Catholic hierarchy investigate innovative ways to fulfil the requirement for leaders in their schools to be “in good standing” and for others to fulfil these roles – executive headships, perhaps

“We have a chance to be serving the poor, we should stop worrying about the dilution of Catholicity”

